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SUGGESTED FOR MATURE READERS

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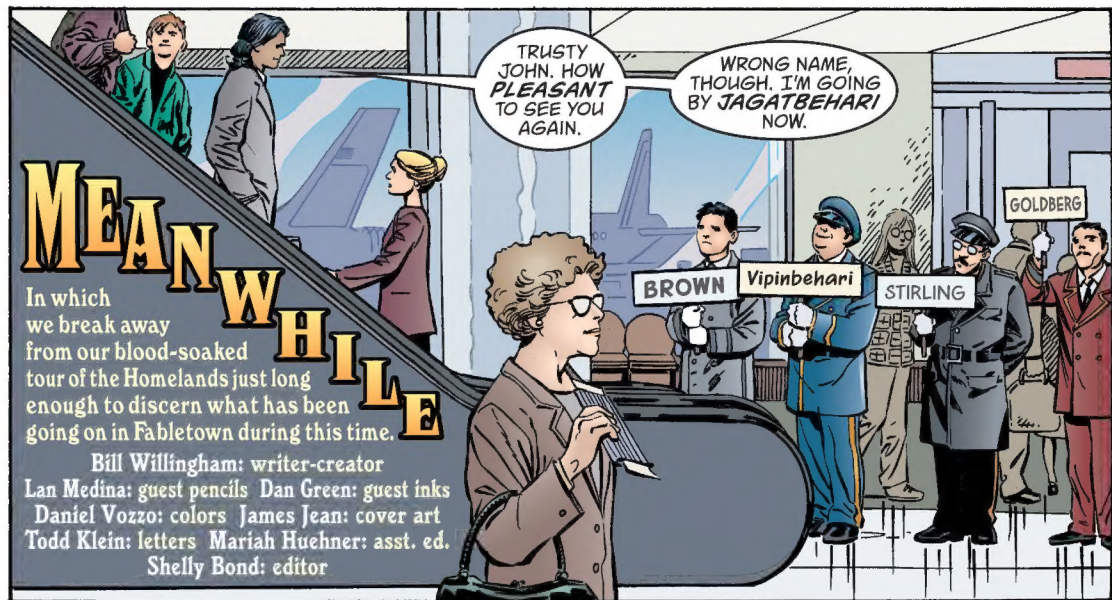
WELCOME TO NEW YORK'S KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.



WELCOME TO AMERICA, MR. JAGATBEHARI. BUSINESS OR PLEASURE FOR THIS TRIP?



PLEASURE, AS ALWAYS. I'M A PERPETUAL TOURIST.



TRUSTY JOHN. HOW PLEASANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

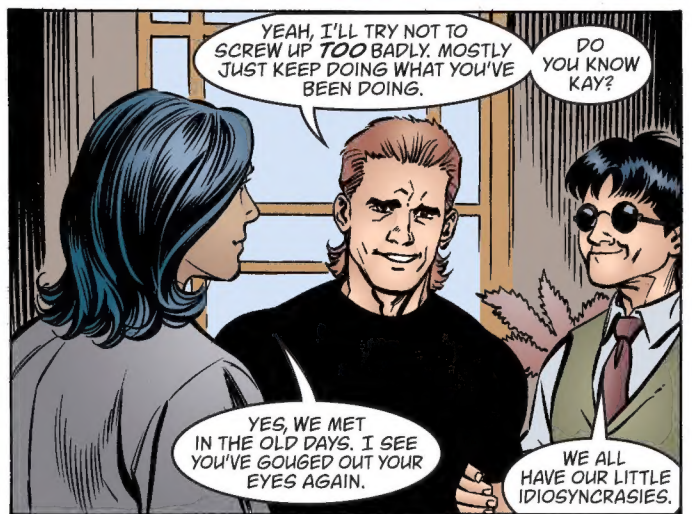
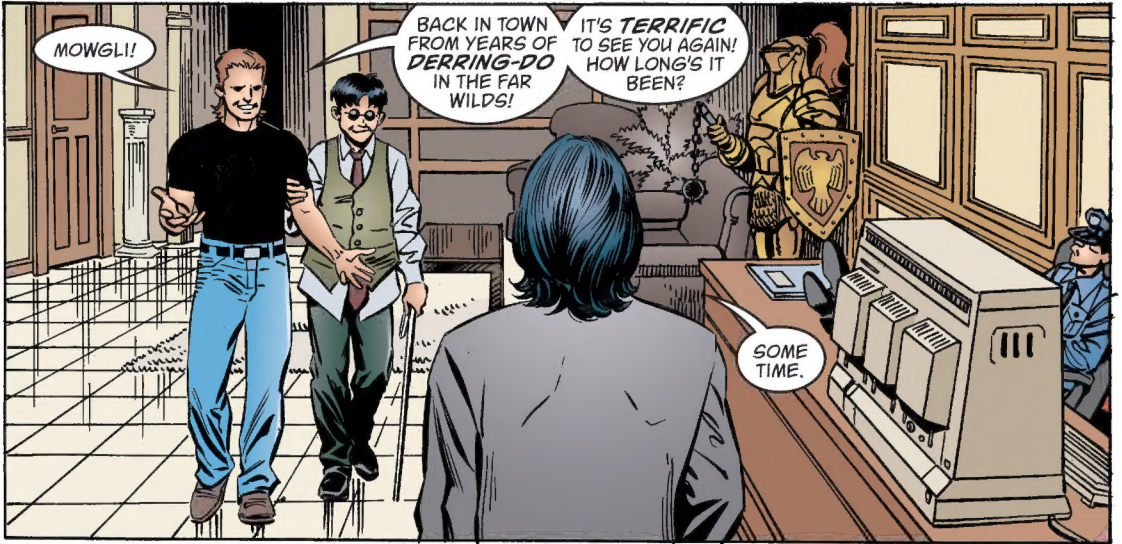
WRONG NAME, THOUGH. I'M GOING BY JAGATBEHARI NOW.

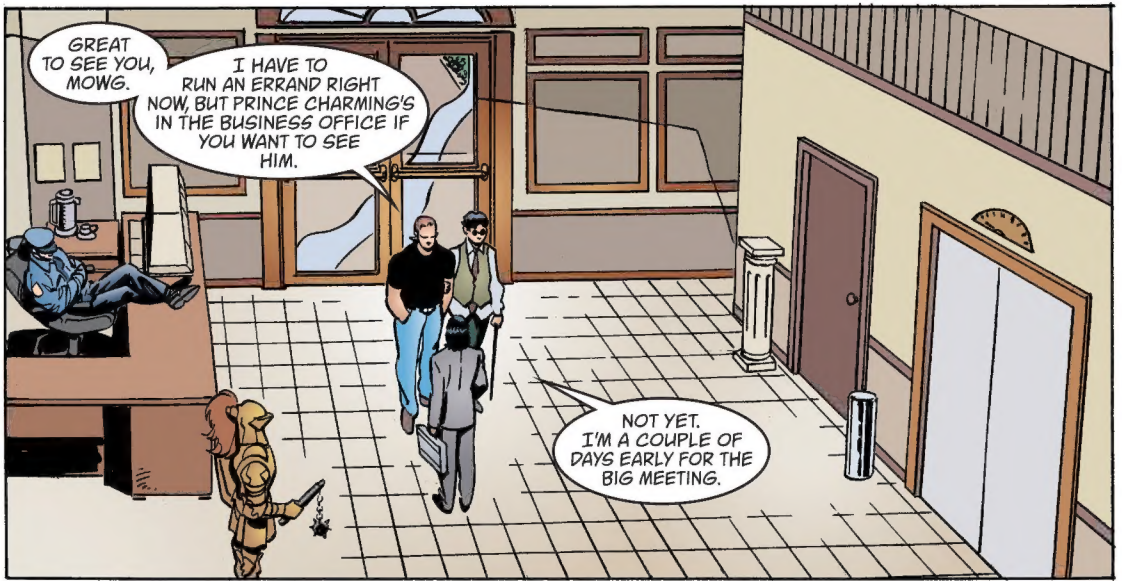
MEANWHILE

In which we break away from our blood-soaked tour of the Homelands just long enough to discern what has been going on in Fabletown during this time.

Bill Willingham: writer-creator
Lan Medina: guest pencils Dan Green: guest inks
Daniel Vozzo: colors James Jean: cover art
Todd Klein: letters Mariah Huchner: asst. ed.
Shelly Bond: editor



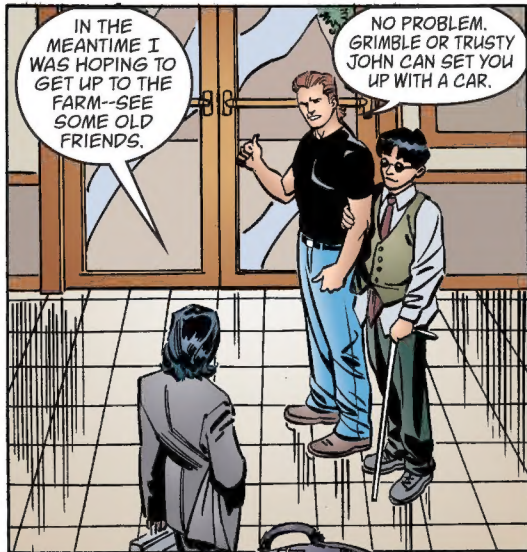




GREAT TO SEE YOU, MOWG.

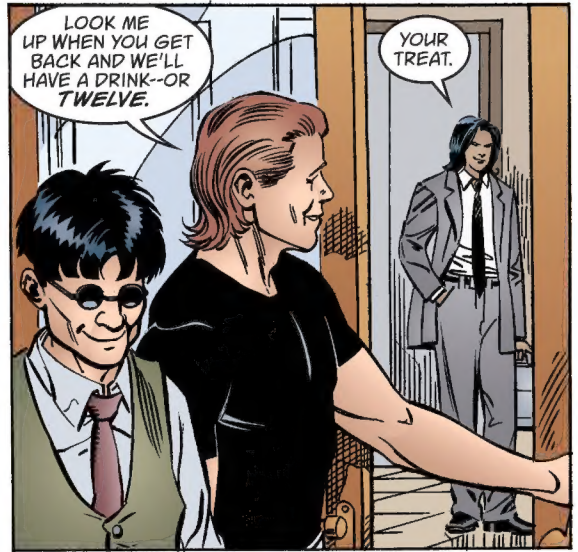
I HAVE TO RUN AN ERRAND RIGHT NOW, BUT PRINCE CHARMING'S IN THE BUSINESS OFFICE IF YOU WANT TO SEE HIM.

NOT YET. I'M A COUPLE OF DAYS EARLY FOR THE BIG MEETING.



IN THE MEANTIME I WAS HOPING TO GET UP TO THE FARM--SEE SOME OLD FRIENDS.

NO PROBLEM. GRIMBLE OR TRUSTY JOHN CAN SET YOU UP WITH A CAR.



LOOK ME UP WHEN YOU GET BACK AND WE'LL HAVE A DRINK--OR TWELVE.

YOUR TREAT.

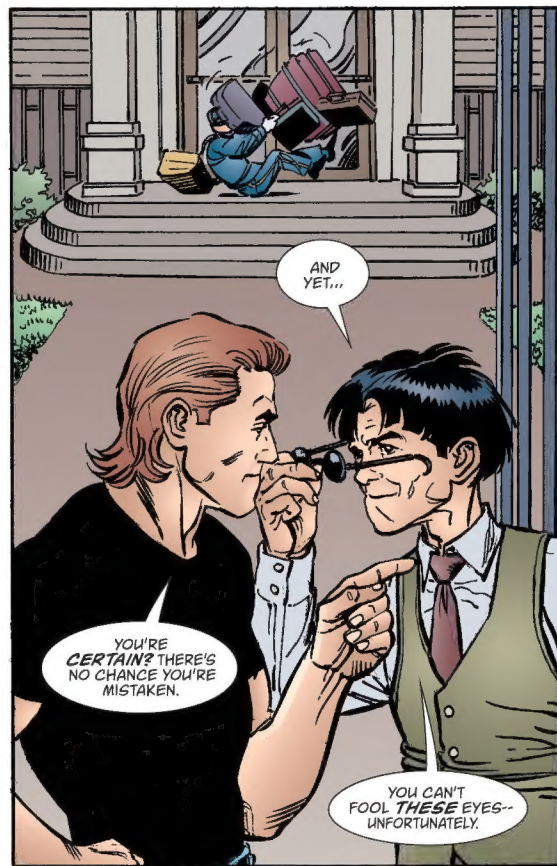


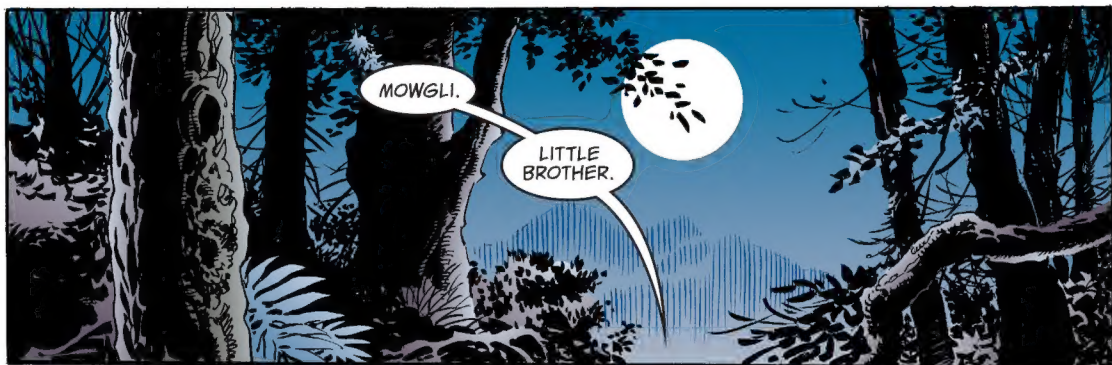
JOHN, YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY ALL OF MOWGLI'S BAGS AT ONCE.

I--CAN--MANAGE--SIR.

I'D GIVE YOU A HAND, BUDDY, BUT IT'S MY TURN TO WALK THE BLIND MAN.

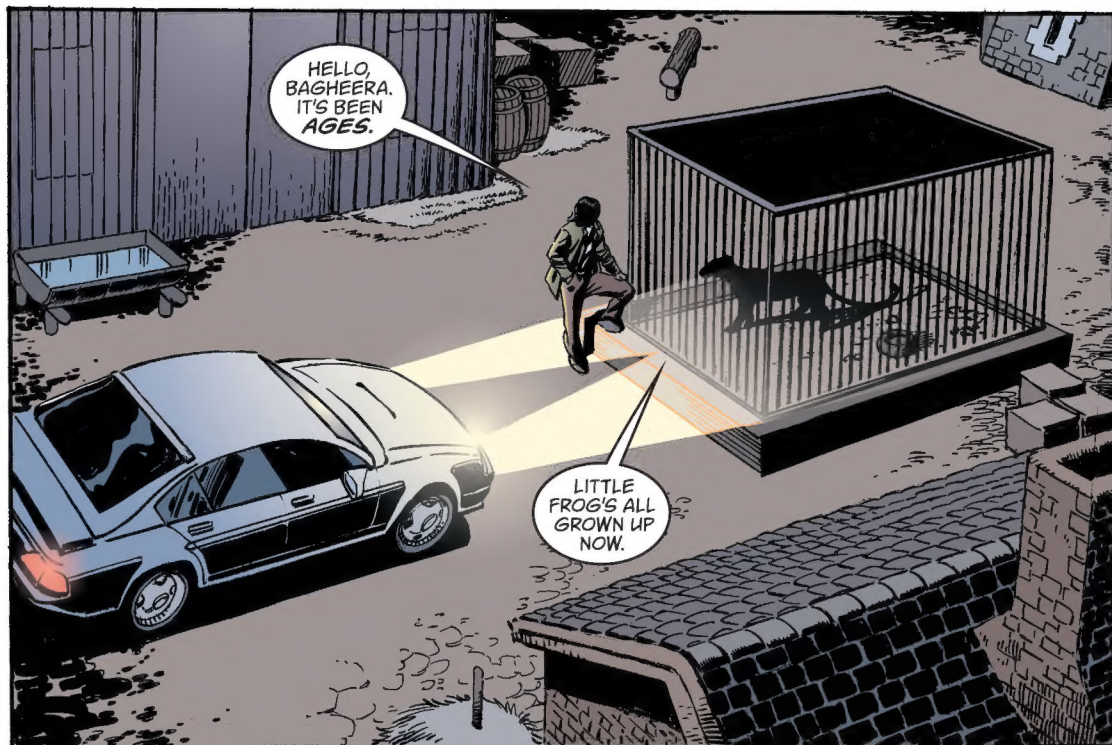
OH, THAT'S TOO, TOO FUNNY. VERY DROLL, BEAST.





MOWGLI.

LITTLE BROTHER.



HELLO BAGHEERA. IT'S BEEN AGES.

LITTLE FROG'S ALL GROWN UP NOW.



I CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE YOU'RE IN A CAGE, ELDER BROTHER.

DESERVEDLY SO. I TOOK PART, ALBEIT PERIPHERALLY, IN THE ATTEMPTED REVOLUTION A FEW YEARS AGO.



THIS IS MY PUNISHMENT.



YOU ALONE? WHY DID THEY SINGLE YOU OUT?

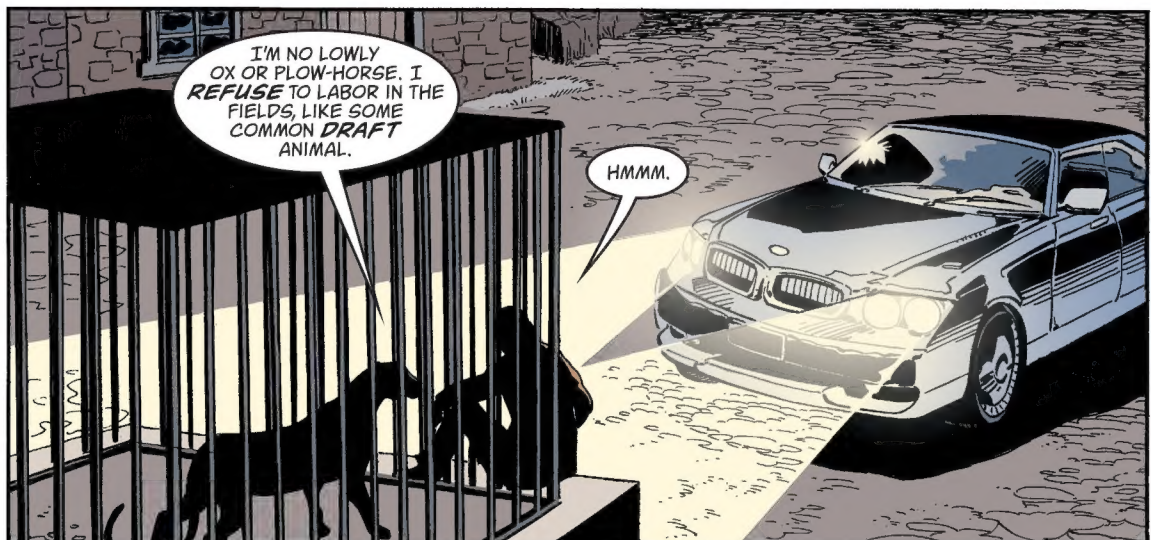
NO ONE DID. THE RING-LEADERS WERE EXECUTED. THE REST WERE GIVEN A CHOICE OF HARD LABOR OR JAIL TIME.



I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CHOSE CONFINEMENT.

WHY?

BECAUSE I'M BAGHEERA, THE SILENT STALKER OF THE NIGHT.



I'M NO LOWLY OX OR PLOW-HORSE. I REFUSE TO LABOR IN THE FIELDS, LIKE SOME COMMON DRAFT ANIMAL.

HMMM.



WELL, I'M HERE TO SPRING YOU.

HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO THAT?

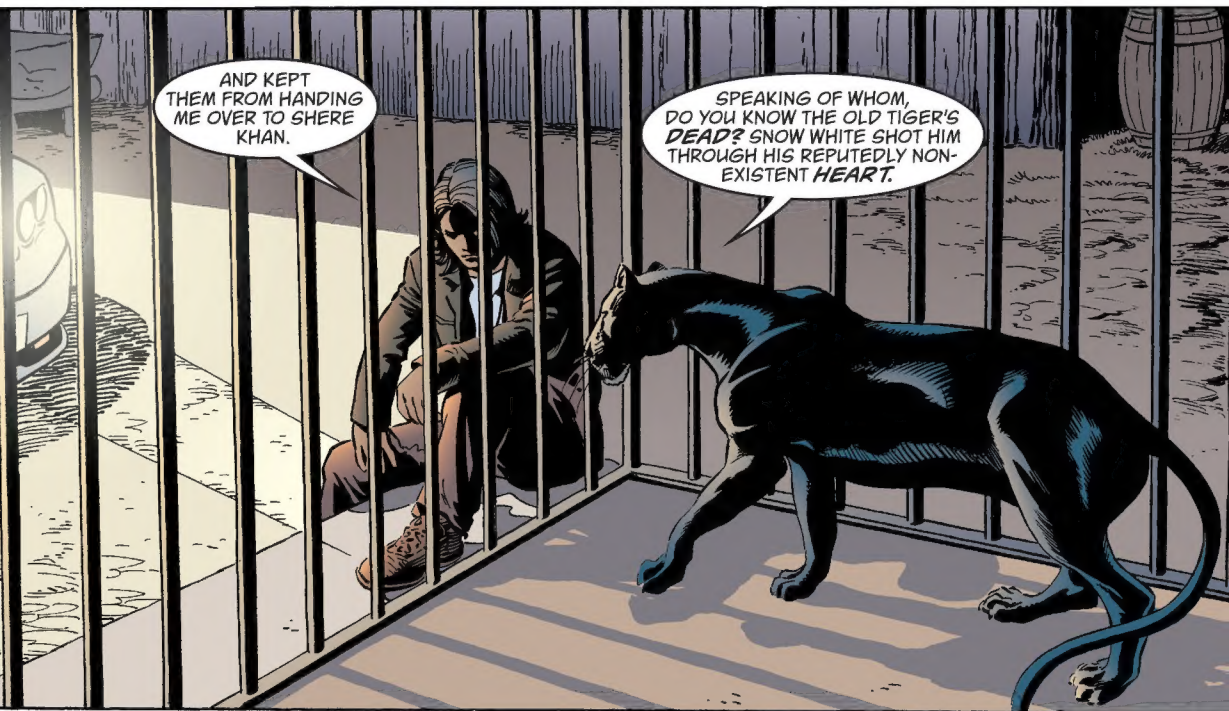
I'M NOT SURE.



BUT I'LL FIGURE SOMETHING OUT. I OWE YOU A BLOOD DEBT. YOU RANSOMED MY LIFE AMONG THE SEENE WOLF PACK.

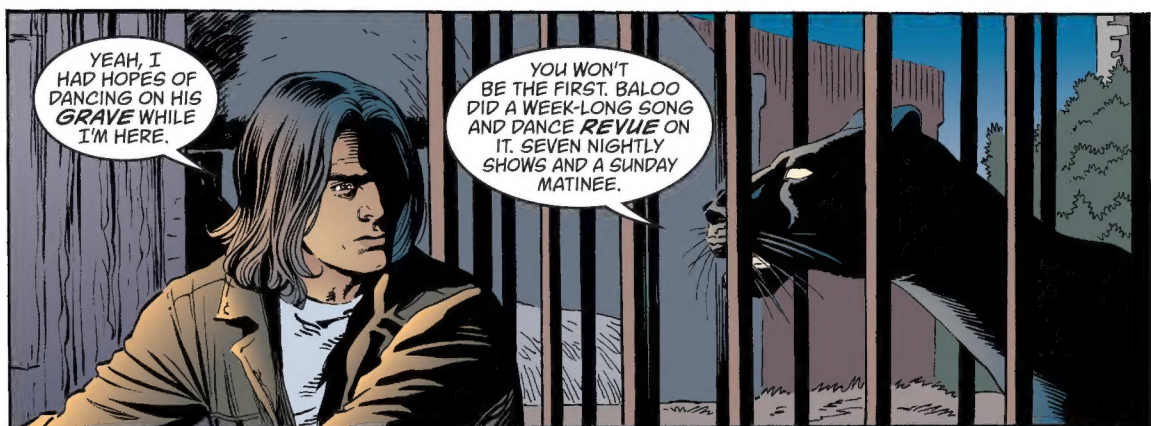


I KILLED A FAT BULL TO BRIBE THEM INTO ACCEPTING YOU.



AND KEPT THEM FROM HANDING ME OVER TO SHERE KHAN.

SPEAKING OF WHOM, DO YOU KNOW THE OLD TIGER'S DEAD? SNOW WHITE SHOT HIM THROUGH HIS REPUTEDLY NON-EXISTENT *HEART*.



YEAH, I HAD HOPES OF DANCING ON HIS GRAVE WHILE I'M HERE.

YOU WON'T BE THE FIRST. BALOO DID A WEEK-LONG SONG AND DANCE *REVUE* ON IT. SEVEN NIGHTLY SHOWS AND A SUNDAY MATINEE.



NOT BEING A DANCER, I HAD TO CONTENT MYSELF WITH *PISSING* ALL OVER IT.



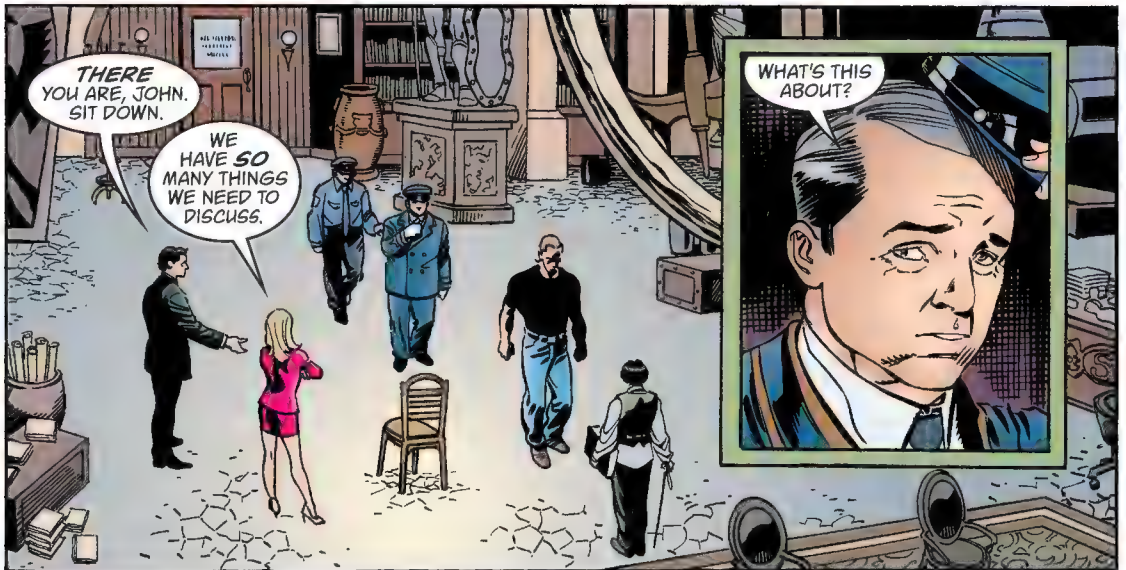
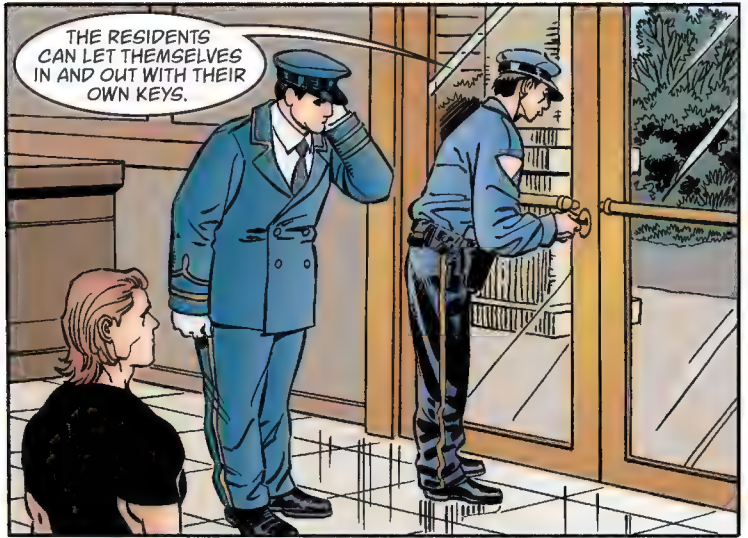
BUT GETTING BACK TO THE *SUBJECT*- DON'T GO KILLING ANY BULLS, MOWGLI.

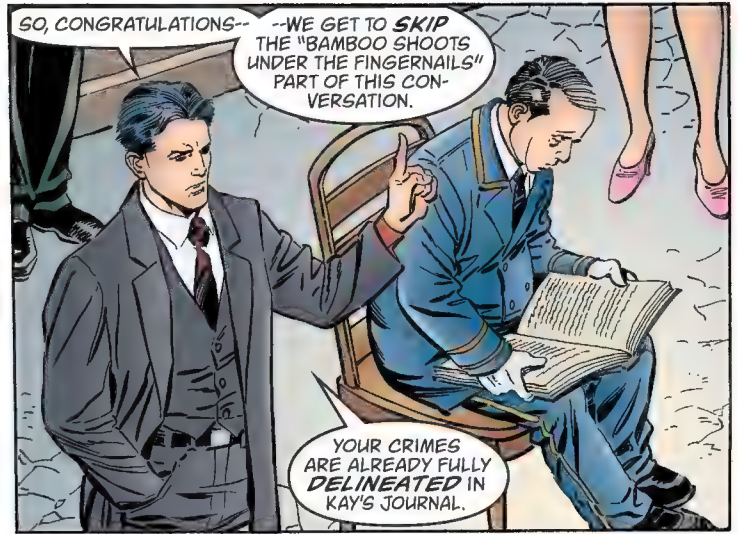
I DOUBT THE FABLETOWN AUTHORITIES WILL ACCEPT SUCH A BRIBE TO GET ME OUT OF HERE.

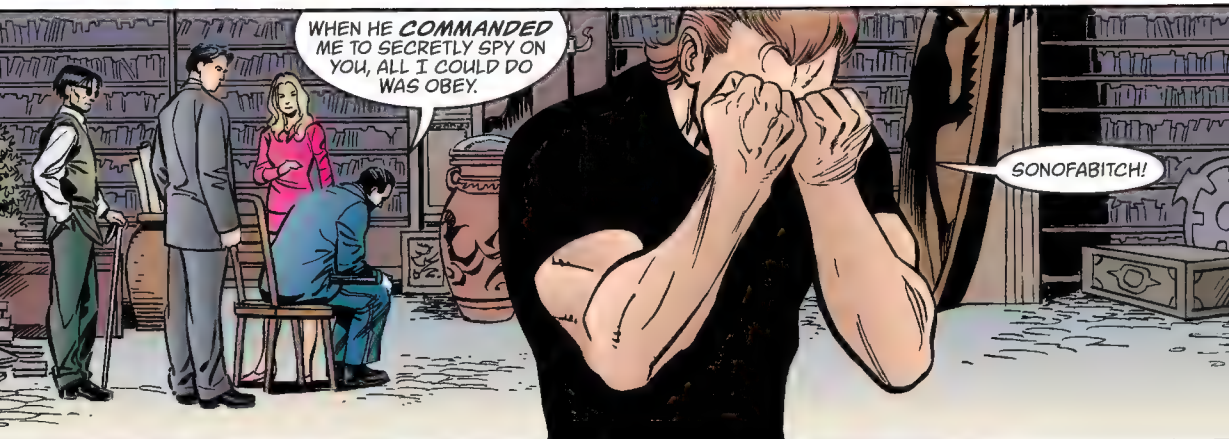
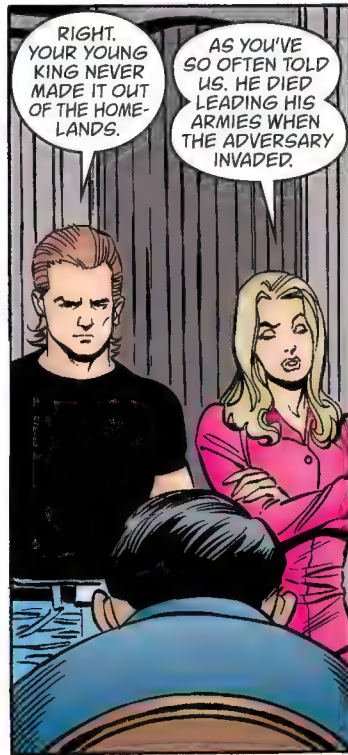
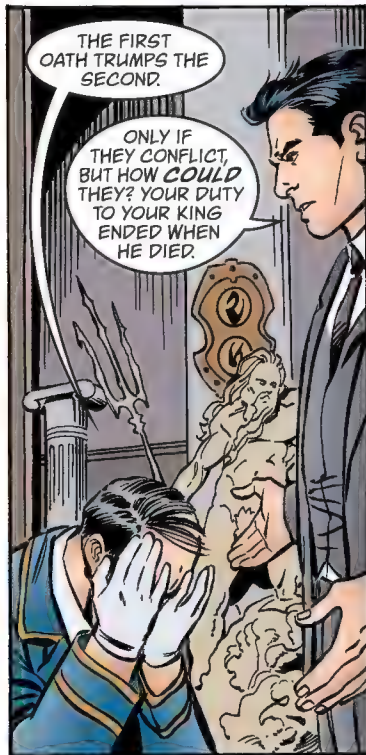
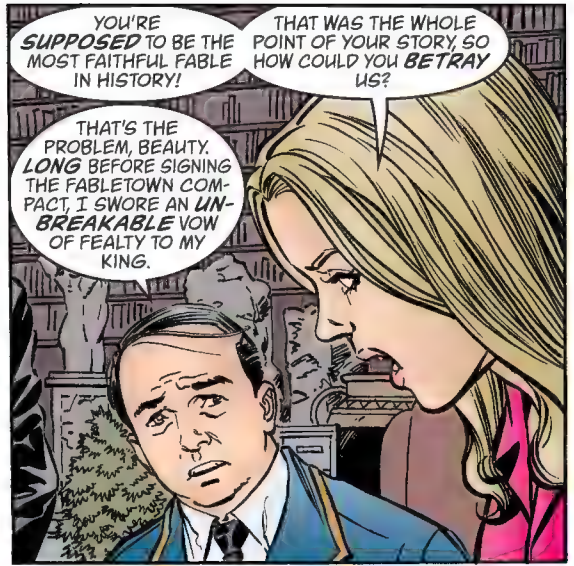
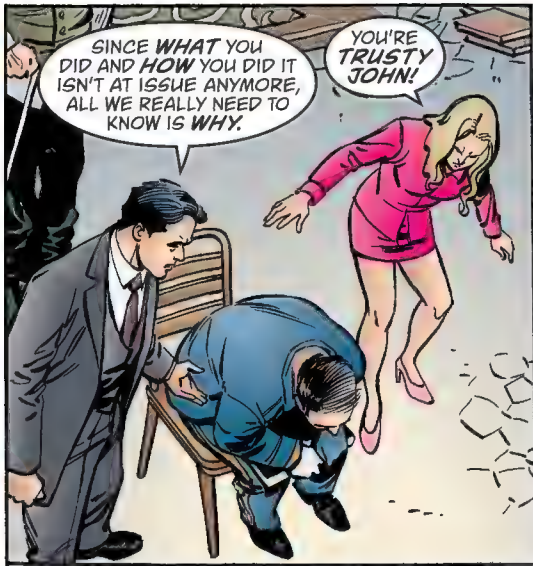


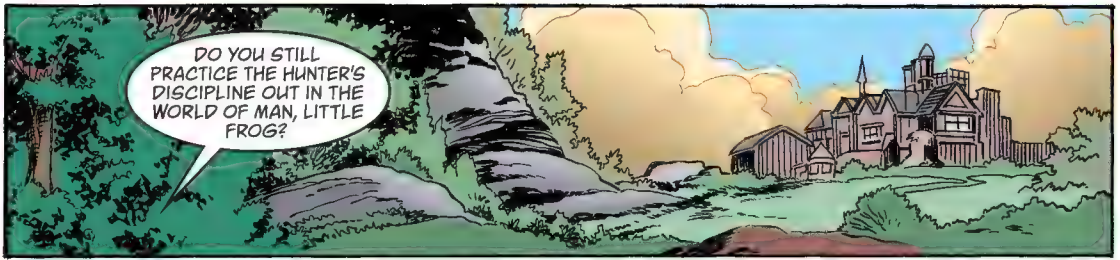
THEN I'LL JUST HAVE TO THINK OF SOME *OTHER SERVICE* TO OFFER THEM.



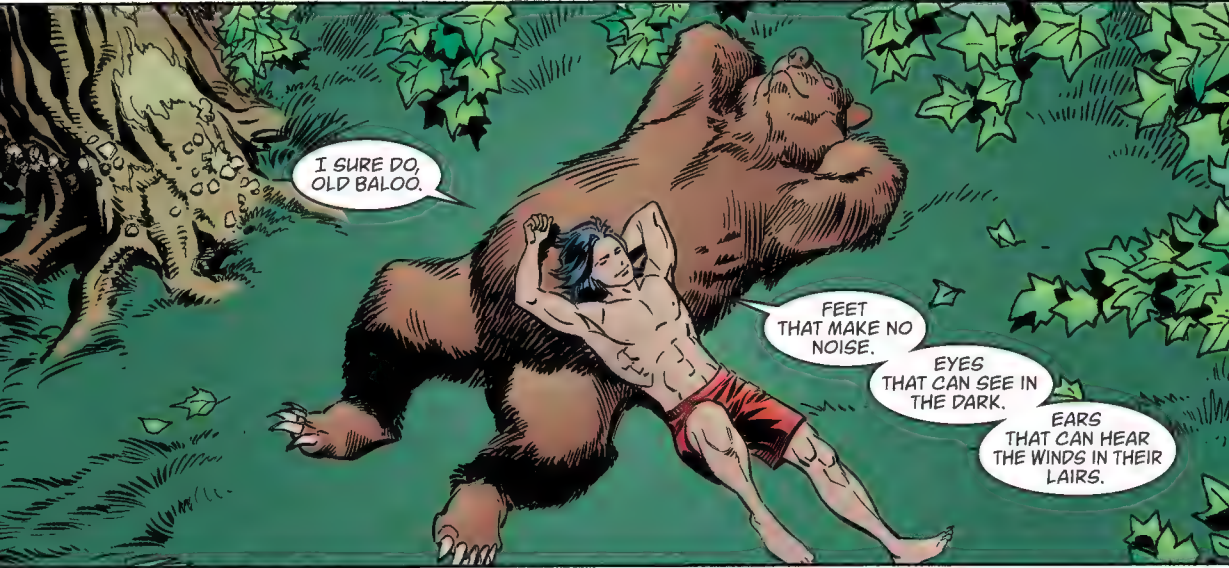








DO YOU STILL PRACTICE THE HUNTER'S DISCIPLINE OUT IN THE WORLD OF MAN, LITTLE FROG?



I SURE DO, OLD BALOO.

FEET THAT MAKE NO NOISE.

EYES THAT CAN SEE IN THE DARK.

EARS THAT CAN HEAR THE WINDS IN THEIR LAIRS.

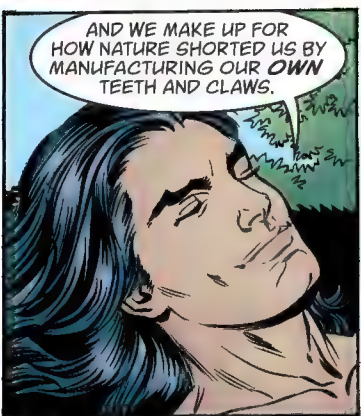


AND SHARP WHITE TEETH.

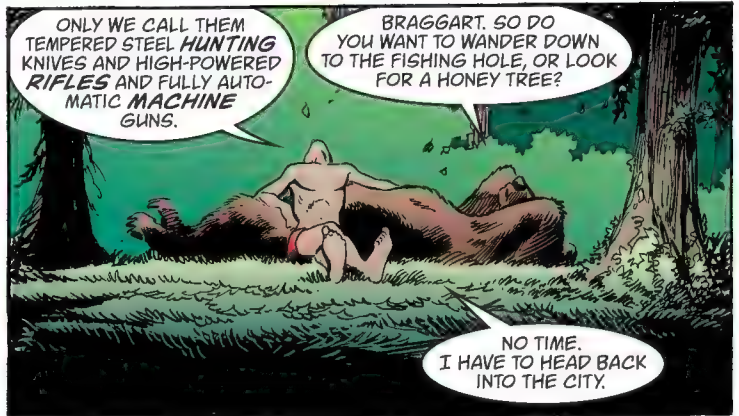
WELL, WE CAN'T REALLY IMPROVE ON YOUR **TEETH**, MAN CUB.

YOU'RE STUCK WITH WHAT NATURE GAVE YOU.

AH, BUT, IN ADDITION TO LITTLE FROG OF SEEONEE WOLF PACK, I'M IN THE WORLD OF MAN NOW.



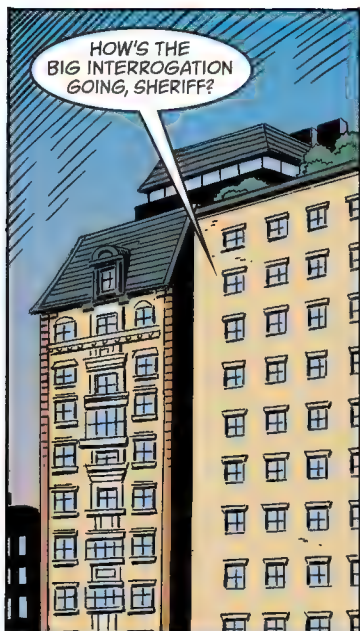
AND WE MAKE UP FOR HOW NATURE SHORTED US BY MANUFACTURING OUR **OWN** TEETH AND CLAWS.



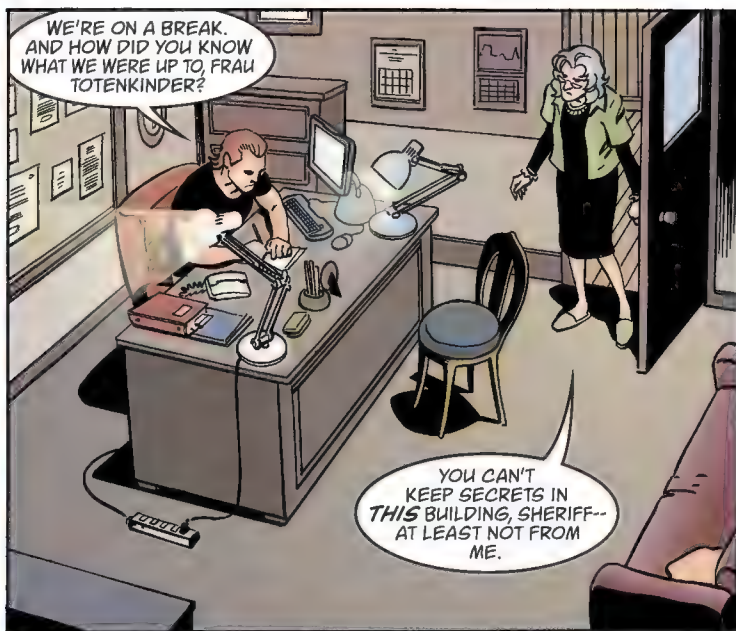
ONLY WE CALL THEM TEMPERED STEEL **HUNTING** KNIVES AND HIGH-POWERED **RIFLES** AND FULLY AUTO-MATIC **MACHINE** GUNS.

BRAGGART. SO DO YOU WANT TO WANDER DOWN TO THE FISHING HOLE, OR LOOK FOR A HONEY TREE?

NO TIME. I HAVE TO HEAD BACK INTO THE CITY.



HOW'S THE BIG INTERROGATION GOING, SHERIFF?



WE'RE ON A BREAK. AND HOW DID YOU KNOW WHAT WE WERE UP TO, FRAU TOTENKINDER?

YOU CAN'T KEEP SECRETS IN THIS BUILDING, SHERIFF-- AT LEAST NOT FROM ME.



WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

YOU OWE ME A FAVOR FOR GROWING KAY'S EYES BACK ON THE QUIET. I'M HERE TO CALL THAT FAVOR IN.

I WANT YOU TO GET SOME INFORMATION TO OUR MAYOR WITHOUT REVEALING WHERE IT CAME FROM.



I THOUGHT HE SHOULD KNOW THAT BOY BLUE'S BEEN CAPTURED IN THE HOMELANDS.



HOW DO YOU KNOW?

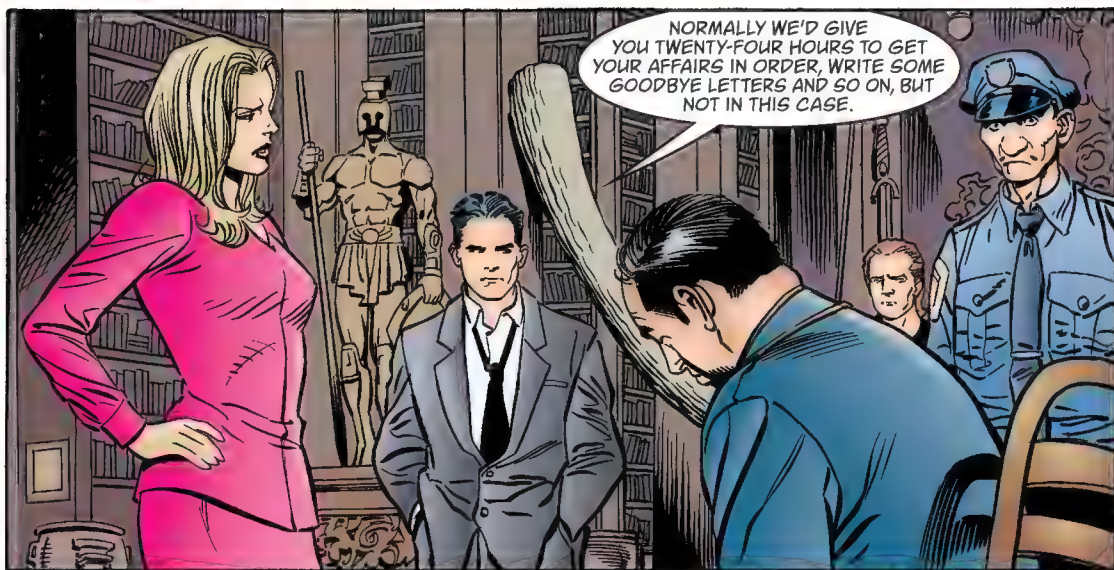
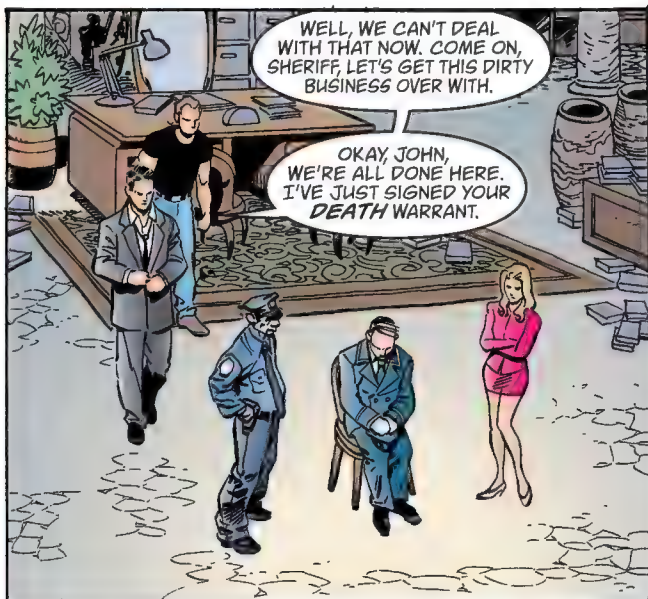
NO ONE GETS TO BE VERY OLD IN MY PROFESSION WITHOUT KEEPING TRACK OF ONE'S ENEMIES.

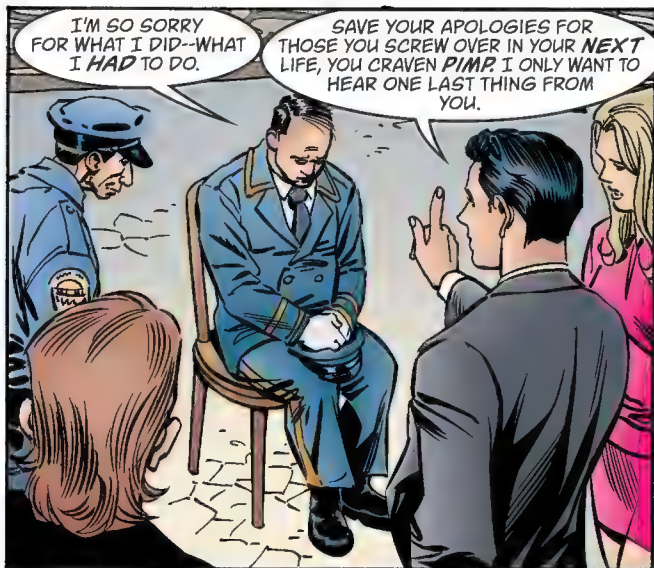
I HAVE MY OWN SPIES PLACED HERE AND THERE IN THE OLD WORLDS.



NO SHIT?

LET'S KEEP THIS STRICTLY BETWEEN US, OKAY?







I'M BEAT ALL TO SHIT.

I NEVER WANT TO GO THROUGH A DAY LIKE THAT AGAIN.



YOU LIKED JOHN.

WHO DIDN'T?

HE WAS A TREASURE. ALWAYS OF GOOD SPIRITS, EVEN IN THE WORST OF TIMES.



AND TRUTH IS, HE REALLY WAS ONLY DOING HIS DUTY TO HIS KING.

I HAD TO REALLY HARDEN MY HEART--**FORCE** MYSELF NOT TO FORGIVE HIM. BUT TREASON HAS TO BE DEALT WITH **HARSHLY** OR IT SPREADS.

ONE **GOOD** THING, THOUGH.



EVER SINCE THE INITIAL MEETING, WHERE THEY BROUGHT HIS KING ALONG TO PROVE HE WAS ALIVE, JOHN DELIVERED HIS MATERIAL THROUGH A SYSTEM OF DEAD DROPS.

WHY'S THAT **GOOD**?



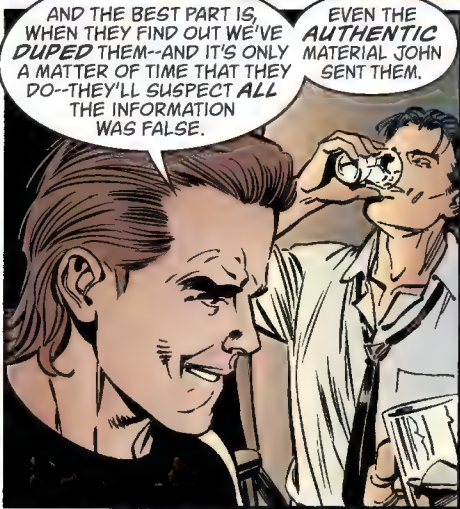
BECAUSE WHOEVER PICKS UP THE INFORMATION DOES SO LONG AFTER JOHN HAS COME AND GONE. THEY NEVER SEE EACH OTHER.

WHY-- THAT'S **MARVELOUS**. DOES THAT MEAN WE COULD--?



YUP WE CAN CONTINUE FEEDING THEM FALSE INFORMATION THROUGH JOHN'S DEAD DROPS, AND THEY WON'T KNOW IT ISN'T COMING FROM HIM.

AND MAYBE UNDO SOME OF THE DAMAGE HE DID TO US.



AND THE BEST PART IS, WHEN THEY FIND OUT WE'VE DUPED THEM--AND IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME THAT THEY DO--THEY'LL SUSPECT ALL THE INFORMATION WAS FALSE.

EVEN THE AUTHENTIC MATERIAL JOHN SENT THEM.



ESPIONAGE IS A COMPLEX BUSINESS.



TELL ME ABOUT IT.

I DON'T KNOW HOW BIGGY WAS ABLE TO KEEP ALL OF IT STRAIGHT IN HIS MIND.



AS LONG AS WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT, WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME HOW YOU GOT THE NEWS ABOUT BOY BLUE?

SORRY, BOSS, BUT THAT'S ON A STRICT NEED-TO-KNOW BASIS. IT'S BASIC OPERATIONAL SECURITY. I HAVE TO PROTECT MY SOURCES.



OKAY, I'LL ACCEPT THAT FOR NOW--



--BUT I CAN'T HELP THINKING YOU'RE AN OVERGROWN KID HAVING FUN PLAYING SECRET AGENT.

YOU MADE A MISTAKE, PRINCE CHARMING.

YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET ME GO IN ALIVE.

I'LL COME BACK SOMEDAY. I'LL BE THE FIRST TO FIND A WAY OUT OF THE WITCHING WELL.

AND WHEN I DO, YOU'LL ALL DIE.

STARTING WITH YOU, PRINCE OF HYPOCRITES.

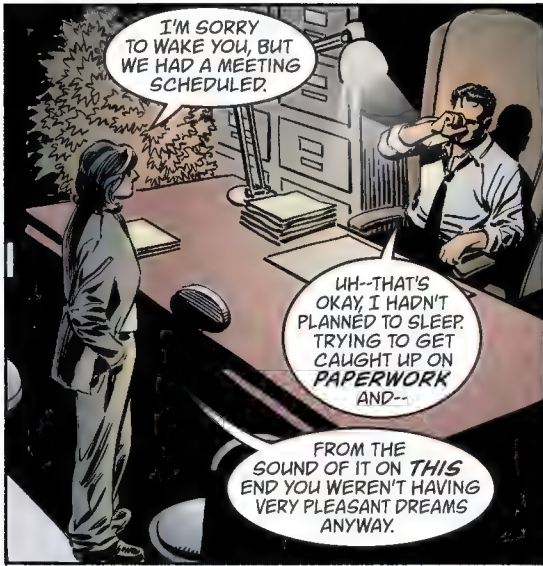
YOU RAIL SO ELOQUENTLY AGAINST BETRAYAL WITHOUT EVER ONCE THINKING OF ALL THE WOMEN YOU'VE WRONGED.

YOU FIRST, PRINCE OF LIES.

...NNNGGGHH?

MOWGLI?

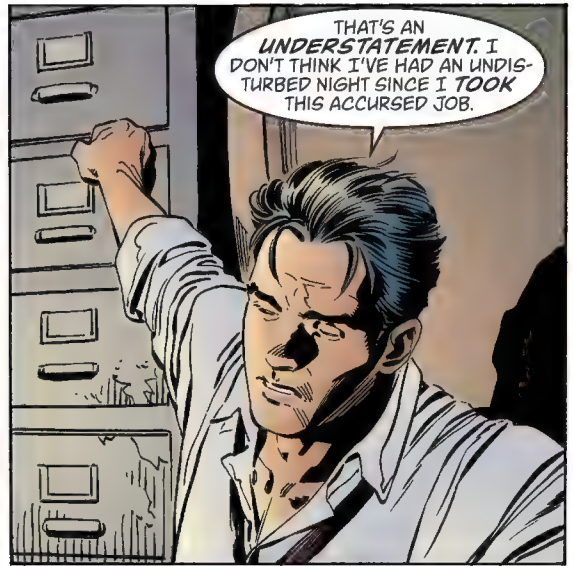
EXCUSE ME, YOUR HONOR.



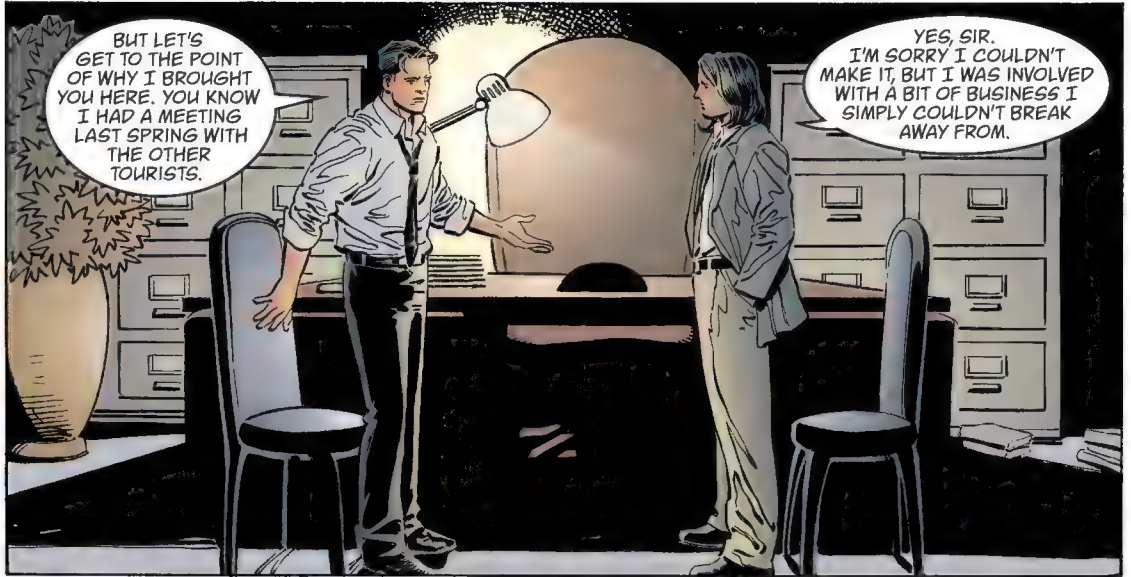
I'M SORRY TO WAKE YOU, BUT WE HAD A MEETING SCHEDULED.

UH--THAT'S OKAY, I HADN'T PLANNED TO SLEEP TRYING TO GET CAUGHT UP ON PAPERWORK AND--

FROM THE SOUND OF IT ON *THIS* END YOU WEREN'T HAVING VERY PLEASANT DREAMS ANYWAY.

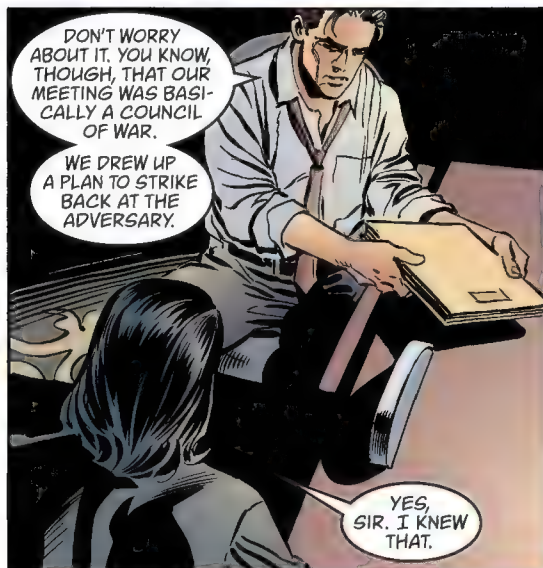


THAT'S AN UNDERSTATEMENT. I DON'T THINK I'VE HAD AN UNDISTURBED NIGHT SINCE I TOOK THIS ACCURSED JOB.



BUT LET'S GET TO THE POINT OF WHY I BROUGHT YOU HERE. YOU KNOW I HAD A MEETING LAST SPRING WITH THE OTHER TOURISTS.

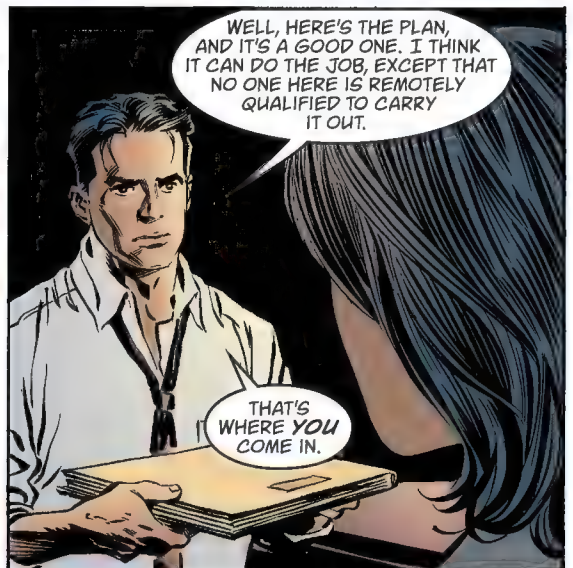
YES, SIR. I'M SORRY I COULDN'T MAKE IT, BUT I WAS INVOLVED WITH A BIT OF BUSINESS I SIMPLY COULDN'T BREAK AWAY FROM.



DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW, THOUGH, THAT OUR MEETING WAS BASICALLY A COUNCIL OF WAR.

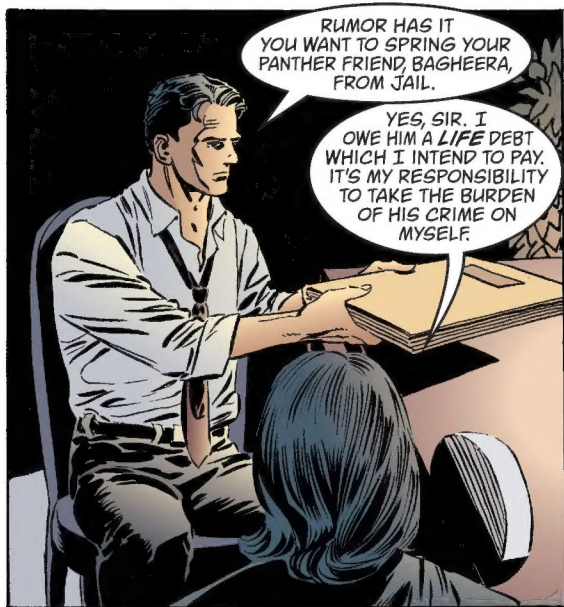
WE DREW UP A PLAN TO STRIKE BACK AT THE ADVERSARY.

YES, SIR. I KNEW THAT.



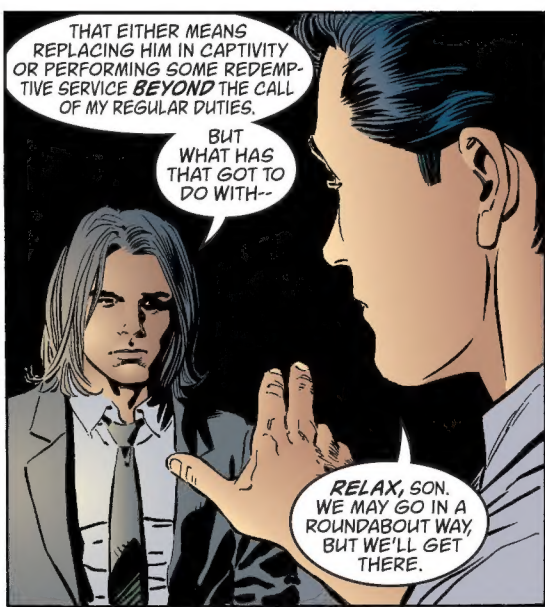
WELL, HERE'S THE PLAN, AND IT'S A GOOD ONE. I THINK IT CAN DO THE JOB, EXCEPT THAT NO ONE HERE IS REMOTELY QUALIFIED TO CARRY IT OUT.

THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN.



RUMOR HAS IT YOU WANT TO SPRING YOUR PANTHER FRIEND, BAGHEERA, FROM JAIL.

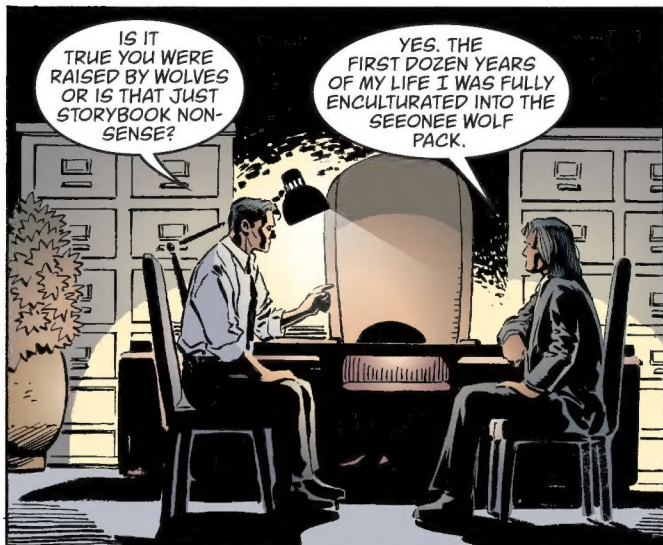
YES, SIR. I OWE HIM A LIFE DEBT WHICH I INTEND TO PAY. IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE THE BURDEN OF HIS CRIME ON MYSELF.



THAT EITHER MEANS REPLACING HIM IN CAPTIVITY OR PERFORMING SOME REDEMP-TIVE SERVICE *BEYOND* THE CALL OF MY REGULAR DUTIES.

BUT WHAT HAS THAT GOT TO DO WITH--

RELAX, SON. WE MAY GO IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY, BUT WE'LL GET THERE.



IS IT TRUE YOU WERE RAISED BY WOLVES OR IS THAT JUST STORYBOOK NON-SENSE?

YES. THE FIRST DOZEN YEARS OF MY LIFE I WAS FULLY ENCULTURATED INTO THE SEONEE WOLF PACK.



AND NOW YOU'VE HAD MANY YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN THE ESPIONAGE FIELD, AS ONE OF THE *TOURISTS*.

YOU KNOW HOW TO TRACK DOWN SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T WANT TO BE FOUND?



YOU WANT ME TO CARRY OUT THIS RETALIATORY MISSION IN THE HOMELANDS?



NOPE. BUT I WANT YOU TO FIND THE *ONE* MAN WHO CAN.



UNDER THE PREMISE THAT IT TAKES A WOLF TO **TRACK** A WOLF, I WANT YOU TO FIND BIGBY AND BRING HIM BACK HERE.

THAT'S OUTSIDE OF MY JURISDICTION AND CONTRARY TO THE TOURISTS' MISSION-STATEMENT. BIGBY'S COMMITTED NO CRIMES.

RIGHT--I'M OFFERING YOU A CHANCE TO PERFORM A SERVICE ABOVE AND **BEYOND** THE NORMAL CALL OF DUTY. SO HIT THE **ROAD**, WOLF BOY.

THE MOMENT BIGBY STEPS INTO THIS OFFICE--UNDER HIS OWN POWER OR BY **FORCE**--I'LL SIGN THE ORDER TO SET BAGHEERA FREE.



?
NEXT:
HE'S ONLY A BIRD IN A GILDED CAGE

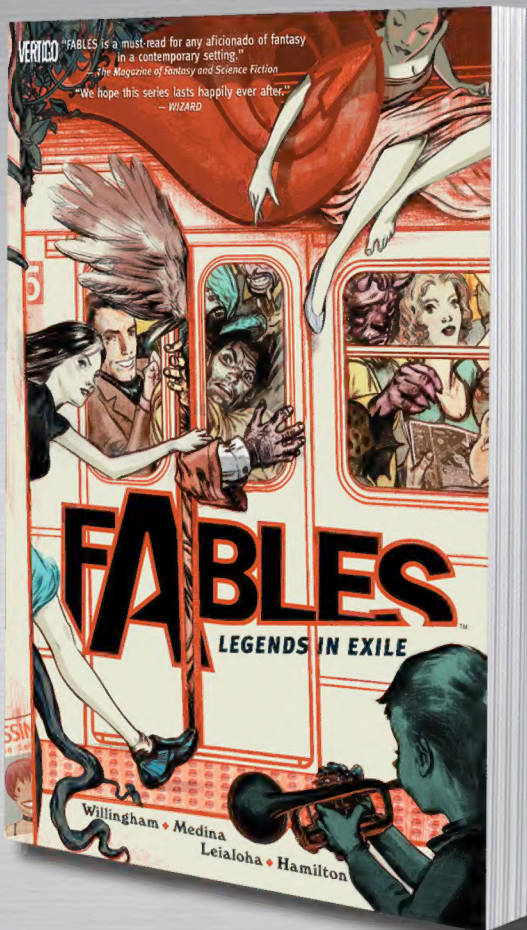
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BILL WILLINGHAM

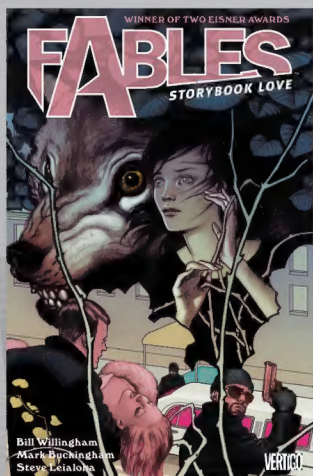
"[A] wonderfully twisted concept... features fairy tale characters banished to the noirish world of present-day New York."
– THE WASHINGTON POST



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- VOL. 4: MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS
- VOL. 5: THE MEAN SEASONS
- VOL. 6: HOMELANDS
- VOL. 7: ARABIAN NIGHTS (AND DAYS)
- VOL. 8: WOLVES
- VOL. 9: SONS OF EMPIRE
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- VOL. 11: WAR AND PIECES
- VOL. 12: THE DARK AGES
- VOL. 13: THE GREAT FABLES CROSSOVER
- 1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL



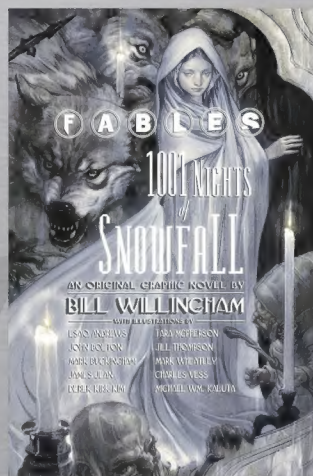
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